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AIRPOWER IN IRREGULAR WARFARE

by

Thomas A Markland, Col, USAF

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Biography

Colonel Tom Markland is a student at Air War College, Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama. Prior to attending school he commanded the 73d Special Operations Squadron, 27 Special Operations Group, Cannon Air Force Base, New Mexico. Colonel Markland is a 1987 graduate from the United States Air Force Academy. During his 21 years of service he has been an instructor and evaluator pilot in the T-38, Canadian CT-114 and MC-130E Combat Talon. He has served at the headquarters level as the Chief, MC-130 Programs, HQ AFSOC, Hurlburt Field, FL. Colonel Markland also served as the Chief of Staff and the Director, Plans and Operations for the Joint Personnel Recovery Agency, Fort Belvoir, Virginia.

Colonel Markland is a command pilot with more than 5,500 hours as an instructor and evaluator in the T-38, CT-114, C-130E/H, MC-130E and MC-130W. He is married to the former Kaye Sixta of Lynch, Nebraska. They have a son, Patton, age 13 and daughter, Carson, age 7.

Introduction

In the summer of 2003 the United States found itself embroiled in a counterinsurgency campaign in Iraq. This was not the fight we chose, but it is the one that found us. As major combat operations in Iraq demonstrated, the United States military has an unparalleled capability to wage traditional warfare. These forces, however, were neither trained nor equipped to wage the counterinsurgency with which they were faced. Where our strategy has succeeded it has not been due to the strength or our doctrine, preparation or training. The many coalition successes have been forged by adaptable leaders and the dedicated efforts of thousands of Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines and Coalition partners. The growing emphasis on Irregular Warfare (IW) since 2003 is acknowledgement that we do not wish to repeat this steep learning process in the future.

Although we perhaps could not have foreseen the insurgency that developed in Iraq, we could have predicted the need for an IW capability. Irregular warfare has a long military tradition. America, in fact, was born of Irregular Warfare against Great Britain. In the twentieth century we gained extensive experience in IW as the American military developed counterinsurgency doctrine and capabilities in the Philippines, Central America, the Caribbean, France, Burma and Vietnam. In these conflicts we developed and often re-invented effective IW tactics, techniques and procedures (TTP). Further, our traditional warfare dominance virtually guaranteed our enemies would adopt asymmetric strategies. Despite these facts, by 2003 we found ourselves imminently capable of conducting traditional warfare to the exclusion of an IW

capability. In Iraq and, more recently, Afghanistan we have been forced to "relearn counterinsurgency on the fly."[1]

This paper seeks to answer the question "what is the role of airpower in IW." The case for enduring air contributions to IW will be made by historical survey. The advent of doctrine for the employment of such capability is analyzed. The paper concludes with organizational recommendations for building a national Irregular Warfare capability. As an important first step, information is presented to familiarize the reader with the basic nature of IW.

Irregular Warfare

IW focuses on the control of populations, not on the control of an adversary's forces or territory.
~ Joint Publication 1, pg I-7

Joint Publication 1-02 defines irregular warfare as:

> A violent struggle among state and non-state actors for legitimacy And influence over the relevant population(s). Irregular warfare favors indirect and asymmetric approaches, though it may employ the full range of military and other capacities, in order to erode an adversary's power, influence, and will.[2]

IW is distinct from traditional warfare in its focus and strategic purpose. Most notable among IW subcategories are insurgency and counterinsurgency. The focus of IW is on a

[1] Steven Metz, Learning From Iraq: Counterinsurgency in American Strategy, (Carlisle, PA: The Strategic Studies Institute, 2007), v.
[2] Joint Publication 1-02, Department of Defense Dictionaray of Military and Associated Terms, 2008, 282.

"relevant" or target population rather than a fielded force.[3] Its strategic purpose is "to gain or maintain control or influence over, and the support of that relevant population through political, psychological, and economic methods."[4] The primary target, then, is the will of the people. Toward that end kinetic effects can be counter-productive. As stated in Air Force Foreign Internal Defense doctrine:

> In counterinsurgency, civilian security and stability are of utmost importance. Air strikes are significantly restricted in order to limit collateral damage—a factor that can alienate a population and increase sympathies for the insurgents, as well as weaken domestic and international political support.[5]

That said, traditional warfare and irregular warfare are not mutually exclusive. Notable examples such as the Chinese Civil War and Vietnam demonstrate that IW and traditional warfare can occur simultaneously or transition in phases.

Airpower in Irregular Warfare

Irregular forms of warfare span the centuries of military history. IW is not a 20th century military development. Within the 20th century, however, modern technology was applied to the conduct of Irregular Warfare with various degrees of success. A brief survey of history reveals 89 insurgencies from 1945 to 2004.[6] The United States alone has participated in twelve conflicts in which insurgents were involved.[7] A comprehensive study of the use of airpower in all such conflicts is beyond the scope of this paper. Rather, this paper surveys a cross section of airpower's use in Irregular Warfare. The intent is to reveal any enduring competencies that can be applied to future IW capability.

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[3] Joint Publication 1, Doctrine for the Armed Forces of the United States, 2007, I-7.
[4] Ibid.
[5] Air Force Doctrine Document 2-3.1, Foreign Internal Defense, 2007, 20.
[6] David Gompert and John Gordon IV, War by Other Means, (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2008), 373.
[7] LCDR Thomas Barber, Airpower in Counterinsurgency: the Search for Missing Doctrine, (Newport, RI: Naval War College, 2007), 5.

Colonial Policing Actions

Immediately following World War I several European nations were faced with maintaining order in far-flung colonies. British policing actions were undertaken in old colonies such as Somaliland and India and new colonies mandated by the League of Nations, such as Iraq and Palastine. The French conducted similar campaigns in Morroco and Syria while the Italians conducted a campaign in Libya. These efforts were undertaken at a time when these nations were financially and militarily decimated by the effects of the First World War. Perhaps an act of advocacy as much as economy, the Royal Air Force contended it could accomplish such missions almost unassisted. The air forces of France and Italy did not attempt this unilateral approach and operated in support of joint operations. Although not all were cases of insurgency, all "contained several large ethnic factions vying for independence or at least autonomy."[8] Thus began a fitful string of airpower employment that learned as much what not to do as how to employ airpower in an irregular setting.

Airpower made a significant contribution in what is called, in today's terms, Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR). Finding the enemy in an irregular warfare setting is often the most difficult part and is a necessary precursor to fixing and finishing. In this, aircraft employed in a reconnaissance role were often essential. In this role aircraft had the most significant impact in areas dominated by vast expanses of desert. Aircraft were also used in a photo reconnaissance role of some significance, given the state of mapping at the time. In these early days of radio-telephony, aircraft also played an essential part in what was termed a liaison role. Capitalizing on their inherent flexibility, mobility and range aircraft were used to pass messages on the whereabouts of adversaries through airdrop or by landing to relay messages.

[8] James Corum and Wray Johnson, Airpower in Small Wars, (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2003), 78.

Their use was often critical to the timely flow of intelligence and guidance between the field and headquarters.

Airpower was also successfully used in a Close Air Support (CAS) role by the British, French and Italians. Aircraft were used to good effect in the conduct of route reconnaissance and convoy support that equated to on-call close air support. Due to the relative infancy of aviation, airpower did not achieve the full impact its advocates had hoped. Still, despite limitations of accuracy and lapses in doctrine, all forces employed aircraft in a close air support role. The use of airpower's superior mobility and relative firepower in conjunction with ground forces made military operations more effective. Aircraft were often essential to finding the enemy and, once fixed by ground forces, finishing them.

By far the most common and effective use of airpower, however, was for air mobility. Air mobility enabled the rapid positioning, reinforcement and resupply of forces. These efforts were essential to the logistic effort as well as combat operations. In Morocco the French pioneered resupply by air and used it to sustain remote garrisons for extended periods.[9] The aerial resupply of French troops under siege at Soueida, Syria enabled the 700-man garrison to fight for two months while awaiting reinforcements.[10] The French also developed the first structured air medevac system.[11] This had the dual impact of improving combat readiness and increasing morale.

These lessons of air mobility would later link to the successful British counterinsurgency campaign in Malaya. Here too airlift was the preponderance of airpower support and "included medium and short range transport, supply drops, airborne operations, medical evacuation,

[9] Corum and Johnson, Airpower in Small Wars, 75.
[10] Ibid, 79.
[11] Ibid, 75.

command and liaison."[12] What the British were to confirm in Malaya was that airpower's greatest use was in "providing indirect support through movement of troops, aerial resupply, reconnaissance and psychological operations."[13]

Perhaps as important as the sparse lessons learned about how to employ airpower were those of how not to employ airpower. Early bombing efforts proved to be highly inaccurate due to the limited technology of the time. This would improve with the passage of time, but the effects of an errant bomb could last many generations. The infancy of aviation technologies married with an often indiscriminate use of force resulted in the frequent unleashing of a load of bombs on the wrong village. This, in turn, hardened the will of the people against the colonial powers. Further, sustained bombing of target populations proved ineffective at coercing the will of the people. Hence bombing achieved some degree of success in irregular warfare but ultimately proved counterproductive as a method to influence a target population. As described by one British Air Marshall, the unending string of tactical victories failed to secure strategic success.[14] The use of the military instrument alone failed to address the political objectives of the adversaries, failed to address the root causes of instability, and failed to achieve success.

It is difficult to fully assess the effectiveness of airpower in these colonial policing actions beyond what the individual militaries found most useful. Measures of performance and measures of effectiveness are distinctly lacking. Hence, it is difficult to establish a concrete cause and effect relationship between the uses of airpower and success. In as far as establishing a trend line, however, it is instructive to see which categories of airpower were beneficial to these early irregular campaigns. All campaigns seem to have demonstrated that airpower was best used in a joint effort with ground forces. Combat aircraft were used to good effect in a close

[12] Maj Stephen Waller, Meeting the Asymmetric Challenge, (Maxwell Air Force Base, AL: Air University, 2004), xlvi.
[13] Ibid.
[14] Air War College, NATO Command and Control Brief, 15 Dec 2008.

air support role. Airpower also provided a critical ISR role. The most common and effective use of airpower in all cases, however, was in the various air mobility roles. Lastly, it appears clear that the use of the military instrument alone was ineffective in the conduct of these irregular conflicts.

Marine Corps Small Wars Experience

By 1940 the United States Marine Corps (USMC) had extensive experience conducting Irregular Warfare. The USMC was engaged in small wars for 85 of the 100 years from 1840 to 1940.[15] Following the Spanish-American War, the Corps was actively engaged in the field for the next 36 years.[16] Hard-earned lessons in insurgency, counterinsurgency and nation building were learned successively in locations such as the Dominican Republic, Haiti and Nicaragua. Hence, when the Corps finally codified their experience into doctrine, it was based on a vast and current body of experience. The pinnacle of best practices and lessons learned is represented in the doctrine they produced. The Small Wars Manual, released in 1940, was to become the seminal work on the subject for the US military for the next 66 years.

This manual was a wide-ranging treatment of IW. Perhaps most striking is the discussion of matters often overlooked in military doctrine. The book opens with an analysis of strategy, political objectives and the will of the people. The discussion subsequently steps through police, legal and psychological aspects of IW. The importance of civil-military relationships is made clear and the military's relationship with the Department of State is specifically addressed. The net effect is to impart the primacy of political objectives and the struggle for legitimacy and influence of the relevant population. All this is discussed before arriving at any discourse on the

[15] United States Marine Corps Small Wars Manual, (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1940), 1-2.
[16] Ibid.

issue of combat operations. In these, despite the relative infancy of aviation, the use of airpower received equal billing with other military capabilities.

The role of CAS is highlighted without making excessive emphasis. One is advised that the inclusion of combat aircraft, if available, "may be advisable."[17] The doctrine does not assume air superiority in all cases, but characterizes small wars as being largely devoid of airborne threats. In the absence of such threats, combat aircraft can be dedicated to support of ground troops. In addition to convoy escort and route reconnaissance, attack or light bombardment aircraft should be employed as an airborne reserve. The intent is that these aircraft can be unleashed, but only upon positive identification of appropriate targets. This, in essence, is the equivalent of modern day Time Sensitive and On Call Targeting.

The Manual identifies the requirement for ISR assets to be twice that of "normal operations."[18] The need for actionable intelligence is recognized as a critical enabler in IW. The difficulty in obtaining such information is compounded by the population-centric nature of the conflict and the battle for perceptions. The Manual observes that "operations are based on information which is at best unreliable, while the natives enjoy continuous and accurate information."[19]

The most critical element of airpower in this analysis, however, is transport aircraft. If aviation is to be a successful element of an IW campaign, it is transport aircraft that will make it so. Observing that small wars rarely occur in developed countries, the Manual advises one to expect an austere environment often lacking in the infrastructure required to move men and machines. The need for, and multi-faceted utility of, the transport aircraft makes it

[17] United States Marine Corps Small Wars Manual, 9-3.
[18] Ibid.
[19] Ibid, 1-15.

"indispensable" in these conditions.[20] Missions such as transportation, supply and evacuation will be paramount. Reading between the lines, it is clear the missions described directly equate to modern-day infiltration, exfiltration, resupply and casualty evacuation by way of air drop and air land tactics.

The basic roles and missions assigned airpower in the Small Wars Manual match those lessons of colonial policing actions. Attack aircraft were highlighted as playing a small but often crucial role especially when used for CAS. Aircraft used in an ISR role could play an essential role in finding and fixing the enemy. The most critical use of aircraft, however, was in the multi-faceted and non-lethal mobility roles. Further, all types of aircraft must be flexible and sustainable enough to excel in the austere conditions one can expect in an IW conflict. Most importantly, aircraft must be used as part of a joint force to influence a target population in pursuit of political objectives. Modern airpower can be employed with much greater precision, lethality and persistence. Modern technology has added the domain of cyberspace. Yet the general categories of airpower in IW have changed little since 1940.

Burma

The creative and irregular use of air power played a pivotal role in Allied success in Burma during World War II. Faced with limited resources and often impenetrable jungle terrain, innovation was a necessary force multiplier. Aerial resupply was developed far beyond the initial efforts to resupply China by way of flying supplies over "the Hump." Movement of whole divisions by air was made possible. Infiltration, exfiltration and pinpoint resupply of specialized light infantry forces deep behind enemy lines were all executed by air. The successful expeditions of Brigadier Orde Wingate's Chindits were models of audacity. The innovations of the 1st Air Commando Group, from which modern day Air Force Special Operations Command

[20] United States Marine Corps Small Wars Manual, 9-3.

traces its lineage, enabled such audacious action. Operation Thursday infiltrated over a division by glider aircraft under the cover of darkness in March of 1944. Timely casualty evacuation was made possible by employing light L-4 and L-5 aircraft from small improvised jungle air strips. The Air Commandos were also the first to employ helicopters in combat. Such innovative use of airpower enabled a freedom of maneuver otherwise prohibited by the expansive Burma jungle.

It had the added psychological impact of giving hope to the jungle soldiers. Hope of seizing the initiative, hope of being resupplied, and hope that timely medical attention awaited the injured. Through innovation limited resources were maximized, the tyrannies of distance and access were overcome, and initiative was made possible.

This same spirit of innovation is a driving force in today's Army. One of the four pillars of the Army Posture Statement is Transformation. Key goals for this effort include modernizing equipment; instituting organizational change to enable modularity and versatility; and developing agile, adaptive leaders.[21] The Army's holistic approach is broader than just developing new hardware. It also includes innovations in training, tactics, processes and institutions. Just as innovation bred success for the Chindits in Burma, today's U.S. Army breeds future success on the battlefield through constant innovation and transformation. The Department of Defense must embrace this same spirit in building a national IW capability.

Operation ENDURING FREEDOM-PHILIPPINES

A recent successful example of counter insurgency and counter terrorist strategy is the indirect approach of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM-PHILIPPINES (OEF-P). Here Army Special Operations CH-47s were crucial in providing air mobility and Navy P-3 and small unmanned aircraft provided critical ISR. The defining characteristic of this campaign, however, has been the lack of direct U.S. combat. Although airpower has been used to good effect, it has

[21] 2008 Army Posture Statement, 8.

not been under the traditional construct of a Joint Force Air Component Commander. Rather, a Joint Special Operations Air Component with periodic augmentation from conventional forces has been effectively used. From 2002 to present, OEF-P has been the largest contingent of U.S. forces for a counterterrorist application without the dropping of a single bomb.[22]

The OEF-P effort was led initially by an Airman, Brigadier General Donnie Wurster, in command of Joint Task Force 510 (JTF-510). The JTF-510 mission was an intensive Foreign Internal Defense (FID) effort designed to empower the host nation military and police forces to remove the sources of instability and effectively combat insurgents. The strategy was based on Gordon McCormick's counterinsurgency model (Fig. 1) and the following principles:

- Consider popular support the center of gravity
- Enhance government legitimacy and control
- Focus on people's needs and security
- Target insurgent safe havens, infrastructure, and support
- Share intelligence, especially human intelligence
- Develop indigenous security forces[23]

[22] Maj Michelle Clays, The Interagency Process and America's Second Front in the Global War on Terrorism, (Maxwell Air Force Base, AL: Air University, 2003), 27.

[23] Col Gregory Wilson, Anatomy of a Successful COIN Operation, Military Review, November-December 2006, 4.

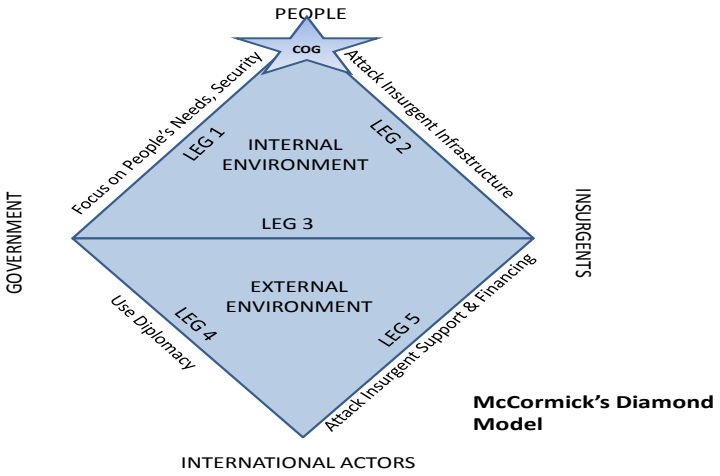

Figure 1. McCormick's Diamond Model[24]

A necessary precursor to this successful strategy was an understanding of the causes and conditions for insurgent activity. Toward that end a Special Forces assessment team was dispatched prior to the start of the operation. The team engaged as far down as the village level. Perceptions, requirements and grievances were collected and have been systematically updated for the duration of the operation.[25] This detailed demographic and perceptual information allowed staff planners to "build a map of disenfranchisement to ascertain where active and passive support would likely blossom."[26]

U.S. Army Special Forces (SF) played the leading role in securing the first objective, that of establishing security and protecting the local inhabitants. This they accomplished "by, with and through" the Philippine Armed Forces (AFP). The extensive cultural and language skills of the SF soldiers allowed them to quickly and effectively increase the capabilities of the military and police forces of the Philippines through extensive training. Once the basic need of security was put in place by the AFP, SF soldiers and civil affairs personnel teamed with host nation

[24] Col Gregory Wilson, Anatomy of a Successful COIN Operation, 2.
[25] Ibid, 6.
[26] Ibid.

personnel "to execute high-impact projects that produced immediate and positive benefits for the local population."[27] Humanitarian efforts further included the building of roads, bridges and wells by U.S. Marine engineers and U.S. Navy Seabees.[28] Additionally, local personnel and goods were utilized at every opportunity. This infused cash into the local economy and directly into the pockets of local personnel, further eroding the root causes of insurgency.

A key element to the successful execution of JTF-510's strategy has been the interagency nature of the effort. The establishment of a Joint Interagency Task Force (JIATF) has enabled the effective sharing of information with other interagency partners such as the FBI, NSA and CIA. Military efforts have also been tied to other instruments of national power through the Pacific Situation Assessment Team (PSAT) working on site with the embassy staff, providing further unity of effort.[29]

One can choose from several measures of success, primary among them the decrease in terrorist activity that launched OEF-P. Where bombings averaged almost 50 per year there have been less than a dozen in the last six years.[30] The kidnapping-for-ransom events that were common up to 2001 have remained at zero since 2002.[31] The AFP has experienced a 65 percent increase in the mission ready rate of their helicopter fleet.[32] The Abu Sayyaf Group has experienced a 90 percent reduction due to the efforts of the AFP.[33] The impact is perhaps best summed up by an AFP battalion commander as such:

> Where once the people supported rebels and extremists because they felt neglected or oppressed by the government, the delivery of their basic needs

[27] Ibid, 7.
[28] Maj Clays, The Interagency Process and America's Second Front in the Global War on Terrorism, 25.
[29] Ibid, 26.
[30] Maj John Densley, The Basilan Model: a Case Study in Counterinsurgency Operations, (Maxwell Air Force Base, AL: Air University, 2008), 12.
[31] Ibid.
[32] Peter Brookes, Flashpoint: No Bungle in the Jungle, http://www.afji.com/2007/09/2926516, Accessed 11 December 2008.
[33] Ibid.

> like health and nutrition services, construction of infrastructure and impact projects, and strengthening security in the community that the Balikatan program brought [sic] changed their attitudes and loyalty. As residents began to experience better living conditions, they withdrew support from the militants.[34]

Lastly, of the 15 U.S. casualties sustained thus far in OEF-P only one was linked to terrorist activity and none have been related to combat.[35]

The FID-centric mission of OEF-P has been highly successful despite the absence of kinetic activity by U.S. forces. The effort has featured a holistic strategy, relatively low U.S. footprint, and a high degree of interagency unity of effort. Although this template will not directly transfer to all IW settings, it suggests such an indirect approach centered on empowering the population and removing root causes of insurgency is highly effective.

Summary of Airpower use in Irregular Warfare

Airpower has made significant contributions to the conduct of Irregular Warfare and will continue to do so. It has been used to good effect almost since its inception. Through the years new technologies have enabled quantum leaps in aircraft performance and weapons accuracy. Creative Airmen are finding new ways to employ existing equipment with stunning regularity. The advent of computers has spawned new targeting options and new capabilities for information operations, electronic warfare and command and control. Cyber and Space have indeed become separate domains of their own. Yet it is remarkable the most effective uses of airpower have remained relatively constant. The ways in which Airpower has been effectively employed in the jet age have been almost the same as the earliest days of aviation. This suggests an enduring nature to the contributions of airpower. Similarly, the nature of IW has changed little in that it is a very personal activity conducted among the people. Kinetic effects have often

[34] Col Gregory Wilson, Anatomy of a Successful COIN Operation, 8.
[35] Maj John Densley, The Basilan Model: a Case Study in Counterinsurgency Operations, 13.

proven counterproductive. Beyond individual categories of airpower, the most effective use is in a joint effort that supports political objectives and removes the root causes of insurgency. When possible, these efforts are best accomplished by, with and through the host nation and in conjunction with our coalition partners.

IW Doctrine Development

In COIN, the side that learns faster and adapts more rapidly…usually wins. Counterinsurgencies have been called learning competitions.
~ Field Manual 3-24, pg ix

The development of IW doctrine for airpower has not followed its many effective uses. Although airpower has been an important part of many IW campaigns through the years, the USAF has been slow to develop a cogent body of doctrine and expertise. Despite extensive use of airpower in irregular ways in Northern Europe and Burma, the failure to codify our experience resulted in little lasting imprint after World War II. Hence, the USAF entered Vietnam with little dedicated IW capability and less doctrine. During Vietnam airpower was used extensively in support of our counterinsurgency efforts. Yet after the war our capability was largely abandoned and any lessons learned once again failed to find a resting place in doctrine. In the 1980s the issue was addressed in terms of Low Intensity Conflict. In the 1990s it was addressed in terms

of Military Operations Other Than War. Both approaches minimized the importance of maintaining a credible IW capability. Hence, at two pages in length, the Vietnam-era USAF basic doctrine contained more counterinsurgency guidance than was available in 2005.[36]

As events have unfolded in Iraq since 2003 and, more recently, in Afghanistan, there has been renewed emphasis on IW and its most notable subcomponent, counter insurgency. The United States Marine Corps and Army conducted a joint effort to produce common doctrine. Thus, the Army's Field Manual 3-24 and the Marine Corps' Warfighting Pamphlet 3-33.5 were released in 2006 as the same 282-page document. The Marine Corps also re-released its 1.25 inch-thick Small Wars Manual, originally printed in 1940. These documents are extensive treatments of the subject. Joint publications 1 and 1-02 have also been updated in the last 18 months and share a common definition of IW.

Contrasted with these efforts, the Air Force has a long way to go. Although the 2007 release of Air Force Doctrine Document 2-3, Irregular Warfare, demonstrates a move in the right direction, more must be done. A review of Air Force doctrine shows uneven coverage of the subject matter. Air Warfare doctrine does not mention IW, but does make brief reference to guerilla warfare in a counterinsurgency context.[37] Counterland doctrine devotes a half page to the subject and briefly mentions the "struggle for control or influence over the…host population."[38] Targeting doctrine briefly mentions that success in counterinsurgency "relies more on 'non-kinetic' means."[39] Air Force doctrine for Foreign Internal Defense has the longest relationship with the subject matter. As would be expected for this sub-category of IW, its treatment of the subject is specific if not exhaustive. The following Air Force doctrine

[36] Maj Stephen Waller, Meeting the Asymmetric Challenge, xiii.
[37] Air Force Doctrine Document 2-1, 28.
[38] Air Force Doctrine Document 2-1.3, 83.
[39] Air Force Doctrine Document 2-1.9, 18.

documents, however, make no mention of either IW or counter insurgency: Air Force Glossary, Operations and Organization, Personnel Recovery Operations, Force Protection, Air Mobility and Special Operations. The recent release of Air Force IW doctrine did not replace any material in these documents. Rather, IW is not mentioned at all in the original documents.

More than doctrine will be required to build a capability. The Army and Marines have always emphasized doctrine. The Air Force, on the other hand, has traditionally emphasized tactics, techniques and procedures. The inclusion of doctrine in formal flying training programs has been almost non-existent. If Air Force members have been exposed to doctrine at all it has rarely been beyond their field of expertise. One Air Force officer described his 21 year flying career as "entirely devoid of any exposure to doctrine through formal training programs."[40] Hence, although common doctrine is an important starting point it must be pushed to all facets of training and education as depicted in Figure 2 to yield a transformation of service thinking.

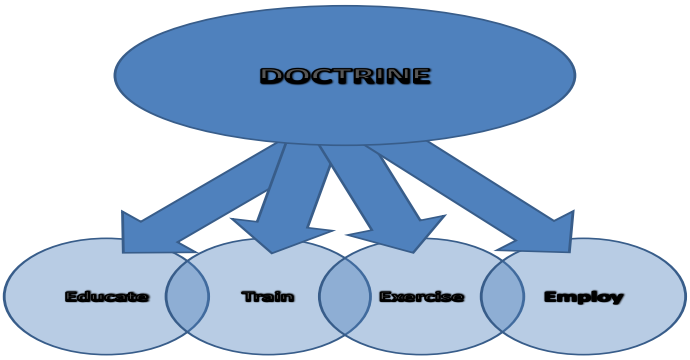

Figure 2. Diffusion of Doctrine

[40] Interview with Air War College Seminar 2, Air War College, 9 Dec 2008.

Configuring US Air Force Capabilities for IW

CNN.Com, Kabul Afghanistan
Afghan President Hamid Karzai said Wednesday that his first demand of the new U.S. administration will be "no civilian casualties in Afghanistan." "We cannot win the fight against terrorism with airstrikes and battles in Afghanistan's villages. This is our first and main demand, to stop civilian casualties."
CNN.com, 5 November 2008

The initially small numbers of trained ground forces will need to apply their developing capabilities to many places quickly. They won't do that with trucks alone. They will need intelligence gained by air operations, rapid air transport, air reconnaissance and surveillance, and air-to-ground weapons support. With good participation by its air arm, a government gains much more viable counterinsurgency and irregular warfare capability than with ground forces alone, and it can apply its counterinsurgency elements infinitely more quickly, more effectively and more often. Airplanes and helicopters are pivotal capabilities that can rapidly transform our allies into successful counterinsurgents.

~ Maj Gen Richard Comer

The United States will require a credible IW capability well into the future. IW is the realm of influencing people. The military instrument of national power plays a crucial role in IW, but it is in coordination with other instruments of national power in pursuit of political objectives. In this endeavor kinetic options by U.S. forces are often counter-productive. Given these boundaries, airpower will play a critical role in any successful IW effort. The recent release of DoD Directive 3000.07, Irregular Warfare, may hasten the development of a joint, interagency IW capability. In the haste to move forward, the Services must not become fixated

on a widget such as an IW-specific airframe. It is true that a low-cost aircraft may play an important role in conducting FID and building partner capability. A national capability, however, must be built on a joint, interagency foundation of resources, doctrine and expeditionary organizations.

Many mistakenly assume that IW is the realm of special operations alone. Nothing could be further from the truth. It is true that United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) has forces supremely capable of conducting IW. The Green Berets and members of the 6th Special Operations Squadron (SOS), for example, are highly specialized, regionally focused and specially trained to build partner capacity. SOCOM also possesses psychological operations (PSYOPS) and civil affairs (CA) units that are crucial to any IW effort. Although all of SOCOM's core tasks support the conduct of IW, however, as of this time IW is not one of SOCOM's nine core tasks. More to the point, a national IW capability is bigger than SOCOM alone and a USAF capability is bigger than AFSOC.

Insurgencies are currently in progress or deemed likely in over 60 countries.[41] In many of these cases a credible IW air power capability may be the decisive factor in government victory or defeat. Our role is not to fight their fight, but to empower our partners with the capability to achieve their own victories. Our assistance will be critical to building their joint warfighting capability. This will require the development of air forces almost from the ground up. The scale and likelihood that we will continue to face such irregular challenges demands more than one USAF squadron can provide. Indeed, it may demand more than one IW Wing can provide.

[41] Maj Gen Richard Comer, An Irregular Challenge, http://www.armedforcesjournal.com/2008/02/3290589, Accessed 16 December 2008.

Many people and units have done outstanding work since 2001. The USAF's FID experts in the 6th SOS played a crucial role in gaining basing rights in Uzbekistan early in Operation ENDURING FREEDOM. Members of the Coalition Air Force Transition Team (CAFTT), the 321st Air Expeditionary Wing, and the squadrons of the 370th Air Expeditionary Advisory Group have done outstanding work building an Iraqi Air Force from scratch. Such successes have not been the result of superior preparation or organization. They have been made possible by the creativity, determination and sacrifice of thousands of American service members working to solve difficult problems. We must use our hard-earned, recently re-learned IW capability as a springboard to build future capability. Any capabilities must be linked by doctrine to the nation's political objectives in a way that strengthens the host nation's "little trinity" of people, government and military.

Organizational Options

The nation requires an enduring IW capability and the USAF will be an important part of whatever form that may take. The USAF contains effective IW capabilities and is proving that fact daily in both OIF and OEF. It does not, however, have a dedicated and enduring capability. Whether the Department of Defense decides to present its IW capability in the form of a Joint Task Force (JTF) supported by an Air Expeditionary Force, or in a smaller JTF headed by a Joint Special Operations Task Force (JSOTF) augmented with conventional Air Force elements, it will need those trained and prepared to execute IW. Undoubtedly both approaches will continue to be used. In either event, it is imperative such forces organize, train, equip, educate and exercise as they intend to fight. An organizational framework is required if this is to happen effectively.

In an age of Communications Wings and Cyber Wings it is not beyond the bounds of feasibility to create an IW Wing. Models already exist to build such a wing. Air Force Special

Operations Command has put forth a detailed recommendation of what such a wing should look like. Alternatively, the 321st AEW is a living model of a wing activated to build, train and equip a partner air force. The answer may be somewhere between these two. In either case, a sustainable capability may very well require more than a single wing. Mission analysis may reveal that such a capability is required in each Combatant Command, but such analysis has yet to be accomplished.

The main advantage of an IW Wing is that it would offer a single node to access suitably trained and equipped personnel with regional expertise, cultural sensitivity, and professional skills specifically geared toward waging IW. An IW wing would be best suited to conduct the spectrum of IW capabilities, from building partner capacity to waging counterinsurgency. The emphasis, however, should be on those effects that enable partner nations to wage their own conflicts. Such a force cannot be mass produced nor can it be created after a crisis occurs. If organized and resourced in sufficient quantity, an IW wing could deploy much more rapidly than temporary units assembled in an ad hoc fashion. Further, in the case of IW, prior presence and engagement can be critical to avoiding a full blown counterinsurgency. Barring such effective engagement, a timely response is crucial to successful counterinsurgent operations. In either case, timeliness often equals effectiveness. A unit, or units, of dedicated professionals focused on this mission area is the most effective way to build an enduring USAF IW capability. An IW wing might be the most effective organization to realize this capability. Such a force structure change, however, will come with costs. The USAF must be prepared to shed capability elsewhere to build this tailored capability.

Another option for creating a durable, coherent IW capability is to give the mission to USSOCOM. It must be pointed out that a SOCOM-centric solution may also entail some version

of the IW wing addressed above. A SOCOM solution is often the default position for those unfamiliar with IW. Like anything in the military, it is certainly possible given enough authority and resources. SOCOM is possessed of forces supremely capable of conducting IW and has frameworks for employing such forces as a JSOTF. Such an approach presents risks, however, to SOCOM's other missions. Further, simply assigning the mission to SOCOM is not sufficient to create the capability the nation needs.

While a full discussion of the forces and authorities required for such an approach is beyond the scope of this paper, it is possible to point out some of the general advantages and disadvantages of this proposed solution. SOCOM already contains the closest approximation of forces and capabilities best suited for the conduct of IW. All of SOCOM's core missions support the conduct of IW. Further, almost all of the required capabilities already exist within Special Operations Forces. SOF are highly credible, imminently capable, inherently joint, regionally-focused and culturally sensitive. Additionally, highly effective command and control frameworks and mechanisms are already in place. However, with the addition of forces and missions the span of control will grow ever larger. Such expansion may also result in diffusion of focus as traditional SOF and new mission interests compete. In the resource constrained environment the military is sure to face competition for resources will be fierce, even within Combatant Commands. The largest drawback, and the one that will be most hotly contested, is that the DoD will have to shed capability elsewhere to build a dedicated IW capability anywhere.

Recommendations

Warfare that has the population as its "focus of operations" requires a different mindset and different capabilities than warfare that focuses on defeating an adversary military.
~ Joint Publication 1, pg I-7

IW is not the be-all, end-all and is not the only form of warfare for which the United States must be prepared. The US must retain a robust capability to conduct traditional warfare. It is clear, however, the US requires an enduring IW capability well into the foreseeable future. The military's search for enduring IW capabilities must achieve balance. The following recommendations are a first step in that direction.

Organize the Force for Balanced Capability: Organize, Train, Equip

Effective IW efforts cannot succeed as an "ad-hocracy." Defining force structure is beyond scope of this paper, but must be done. Beginning with the next Quadrennial Defense Review, a national decision must be made on the size and shape of the United States' IW capability. A holistic solution will require careful mission analysis that balances risk and requirement. A credible capability must include full interagency participation. It must also include personnel specifically trained and educated in IW skill sets. An enduring capability must also include recognition, management and career advancement opportunities for these personnel. As mentioned previously, this is a national capability that exceeds any single Service's ability to solve.

There are templates in existence which could serve as a model for building an IW capability. The CAFTT and the 6th SOS may serve as partial templates. Additionally, AFSOC has defined a template for the IW wing concept. A possible solution from an air perspective may include standing up one or more IW wings. A more holistic solution may be to assign the

mission to USSOCOM and resource it accordingly. Both approaches have inherent benefits and costs. An IW wing would provide rapid deployment of regionally-focused professionals for both routine and crisis response purposes. Similarly, assigning the mission to USSOCOM would bring to bear a core of highly capable, inherently joint forces steeped in the skill sets required. Either approach, however, will come at the expense of other capabilities within the DoD. The final solution will come only after sufficient mission analysis and difficult resourcing decisions.

Integrate Doctrine

Although the varied capabilities and perspectives of the Services are important elements of a Joint capability, they must all serve the same end state. The USAF's view on IW and doctrinal foundations thereof must be congruent with that of the other Services. Congruent Service doctrine must be forged in a common effort with shared timelines. Thenceforth, the USAF must embed such elements of common IW doctrine as are appropriate throughout the AF family of doctrine.

Educate, Train and Exercise

To be effectively employed, common doctrine must be reflected in all Service and Joint education, training and exercise venues. A culture change is required to move away from the USAF's kinetic-centric focus. Such change will only result from a comprehensive approach to building IW capability. With force structure and doctrine defined, there must be more robust mechanisms to train and assess Air Force members to doctrinal standard. Individual competence and joint interoperability must be achieved through recurring Joint exercises. Even more than in conventional combat operations, the importance of training as you intend to fight will be crucial to IW success.

Conclusion

Irregular Warfare has endured through the centuries. The latter half of the twentieth century alone witnessed 89 cases of counterinsurgency.[42] Aside from the current conflicts, the United States can expect to face this style of warfare in the future perhaps with increased frequency. The nation requires an enduring capability to succeed in this operating environment. Changes in force structure, doctrine, education, training and exercises will be required and work must begin immediately. This will be a daunting task. It will, however, build on the excellent personnel and capabilities already resident in the United States Military. The end result will be a coherent, sustainable national IW capability.

[42] David Gompert and John Gordon IV, War by Other Means, 373.

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